

ALTERNATIVE C

OVERALL CONCEPT

In this alternative, most of the island would be truly primitive. Emphasis would be placed on providing superlative wilderness experiences, solitude, and escape from the intrusions of the modern world. Facilities and development would be scaled back and evidence of management activities would be minimal. Party size would be limited to a maximum of six people for overnight use on the island.

Visitation would be managed through a reservation system. Permits could be issued on a first-come, first-served basis, or a lottery system could be used. Various systems would be carefully evaluated before one was chosen.

Emphasis would be placed on providing orientation and interpretation at the Houghton headquarters and other ferry staging areas. Additional information would be provided in written materials. No interpretive media or formal programs would be offered on the island because they could intrude on the wilderness character.

Ferry service would be provided to Rock Harbor and Windigo only. Water taxi service would be eliminated.

Consistent with the concept of this alternative, all cultural resources would be documented and allowed to decay. No stabilization or preservation of these resources would be attempted. The Coast Guard would continue to maintain navigational aids, and the National Park Service would continue to maintain access to these areas; however, when the lighthouses are turned over to the National Park Service, they would be documented and allowed to decay. Lighthouses could be maintained, however, by the Coast Guard or some other entity.

PARK MANAGEMENT ZONES

Only those facilities necessary for island management and maintenance support would remain on the island. The ranger station and ferry dock would remain at the Windigo developed zone, but staff housing would be reduced. Ranger stations at Amygdaloid Island and Malone Bay would be removed.

Developed zones would be retained only at Rock Harbor and Windigo. All concessions and related facilities would be removed. There would be less need for NPS maintenance and support, so crucial functions would be relocated from Mott Island to Rock Harbor to consolidate operations. Actions necessary to implement this concept would be:

- removing all NPS facilities (headquarters, maintenance, housing) from Mott Island
- moving any absolutely necessary operations functions (such as the fire cache) to Rock Harbor
- removing all concessions (lodging, food service, store, fuel sales, boat rental) from Rock Harbor and Windigo
- removing any unnecessary NPS facilities (including housing) from Rock Harbor and Windigo

The **frontcountry zone** would not be used because more intensive use and structured interpretive experiences are not consistent with the concept of this alternative.

Wilderness portal zones at Rock Harbor and Windigo would serve as staging areas for entry to the wilderness for visitors. To compensate for the elimination of lodging, campgrounds at these sites could be made larger if demand warranted.

Backcountry zones in a few areas would provide day hiking opportunities, moderate use trails, and camping sites for motorized and nonmotorized users. Removal or relocation of docks and campgrounds would separate and disperse users. Particularly at campgrounds within a day's hike of Rock Harbor, where use would be concentrated, docks would be removed to reduce use pressure. To compensate, docks and campgrounds accessible by motorboat would be added in locations not accessible by trail. With removal of park facilities from Mott Island, additional camping and hiking for motorboaters could be offered. Actions to implement this alternative would include:

- constructing a new dock and a motorboat campground at Wright Island
- adding motorboat campgrounds at Mott Island, the west end of Amygdaloid Island, and at the east end of Washington Island or on Barnum Island
- removing docks at Daisy Farm and Threemile campgrounds
- adding a hiker/paddler campground between Rock Harbor and Scoville Point

Several trails that are difficult to maintain, duplicative, or little used would be eliminated to decrease the need for trail maintenance and increase cross-country hiking and camping opportunities. Most other trails would be in **primitive zones** and managed for low use levels to ensure solitude. Shelters would be removed except where necessary for resource protection. In several areas individual camping sites would be dispersed to increase opportunities to camp out of sight and sound of other users. Actions to implement this concept would include:

- providing dispersed individual campsites at Richie, Intermediate, and Whittlesey Lakes and at McCargoe Cove
- removing the Minong Trail from the Huginnin loop to Hatchet Lake junction, the trail from

Malone Bay to Ishpeming Point, the eastern portion of the Chickenbone loop, the trail from Lake Richie to Chippewa Harbor (excluding the portage trail), the western portion of Daisy Farm to Greenstone Ridge loop, and the Greenstone Trail from Mount Franklin to Lookout Louise and Hidden Lake

- removing docks at Todd Harbor, Siskiwit Bay, Birch Island, Malone Bay, Duncan Bay, and Moskey Basin campgrounds to convert to paddler or paddler/hiker campgrounds
- removing Wood Lake and North Lake Desor campgrounds
- removing the dock and campground at Chippewa Harbor
- removing trail and interpretive signs at Raspberry Island and Rock Harbor Lighthouse

In order to increase wilderness experiences for paddlers and to reduce noise in primitive and pristine zones, several bays and coves would be in the **nonmotorized zone** (see Alternative C map).

Low-speed **quiet/no-wake zones** would be designated in many other bays, coves, and harbors, further reducing noise impacts and wake-related disruption of waterfowl nesting areas (see Alternative C map).

CONCESSIONS SERVICES

Concessions-operated ferries would serve only Rock Harbor and Windigo. Water taxi service, lodging, food service, the store, fuel sales, and boat rentals would be removed or discontinued. The associated structures would be removed except those needed to support the operational functions that would be relocated to Rock Harbor from Mott Island.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Phasing for alternative C would be similar to the proposed action except that the highest priority would be the removal of concession facilities at Rock Harbor and Windigo. This would eliminate the need for upgrades at Rock Harbor and would allow for removal of housing and other support facilities for the concession.

Docks and trails in poor condition would be removed first. Campgrounds and other facilities would follow before the NPS presence was fully reduced. The facilities at Mott Island would be

removed after critical functions were relocated to Rock Harbor. As facilities were removed, adjacent nonmotorized water zones would be established.

Over and above alternative A (no action) costs, alternative C construction costs (which are actually costs for demolition of facilities and removal of materials) are estimated at \$13,260,000. Additional research, inventory, and monitoring costs are estimated at \$2,130,000 (one-time) and \$10,000 annually. See Appendix B for details.